

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and Allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

The Applicant thanks Examiner Prone and Examiner McDermott for the courtesies extended during the personal interview of October 19, 2005.

During the course of the interview, it was agreed that the “current references on their own do not disclose all of the claimed subject matter” as set forth in the Interview Summary form. In addition, it was discussed that a further search would be conducted in an attempt to find prior art that taught or suggested the invention as claimed in claims 1-13 and 17-22.

In addition, during the course of the interview, Examiner McDermott suggested alternate, non-limiting changes to claims 1 and 11 to make them read better. Claims 1 and 11 have been so-amended herein.

Furthermore, during the course of the interview, it was agreed that the claim amendments set forth herein would not raise any new issues. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection be withdrawn, and that this Application pass to Allowance.

In addressing the rejections, claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,554,181 to Das. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Specifically, as discussed during the interview, Das does not teach or suggest a catheter tip having a lumen therein for receiving an end of a catheter. Moreover, Das does not teach or suggest a retaining ring constructed of a shape memory material as claimed. Rather, Das merely discloses a self-expanding stent which is released when a sheath 78 is retracted from a core 80. It is respectfully requested, therefore, that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-10 are allowable in view of their dependence upon base claim 1, and also for their respective recitations of additional benefits of the present invention.

Claim 11 recites, among other things, the inclusion of tracking means having a catheter lumen for receiving an end of a catheter therein. This limitation is clearly not taught

or suggested anywhere in Das. In addition, claim 11 recites coupling means for coupling a catheter tip to an end of a catheter. Again, Das does not teach or suggest such a construction. Finally, claim 11 further recites that the coupling means comprises a “superelastic material for causing the coupling means to return to a first set configuration having a first diameter from a second expanded configuration having a second diameter greater than the first diameter to thereby couple the tracking means to the end of the catheter.” Instead, as discussed above, Das simply discloses a self-expanding stent that is deployed when a sheet 78 is retracted from a core 80.

Claims 12 and 13 are allowable based on their dependence on claim 11 and also for their respective recitations of additional aspects of the invention.

Claims 1, 11, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 3,674,014 (Tillander) in view of Das. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The deficiencies of Das are noted above. With respect to Tillander, this reference does not teach or suggest “a retaining ring constructed of a shape memory material.” Rather, the disclosed link 5 is made of “a non-magnetic stainless steel.” (See, column 3, lines 33-35.) Moreover, Tillander does not teach or suggest to provide such a retaining ring, wherein it is configured to return to its first diameter to thereby couple the end of a catheter to a catheter tip as claimed. Rather, Tillander merely discloses a “tip 3 [which] is a tube formed of a plurality of individual cylindrical tubular sections 4 connected end-to-end by cylindrical connecting links 5.” This tip 3 is connected to a “catheter tube 2” by a threaded connection 10.

It is, therefore, clear that neither Tillander nor Das taken alone or in combination teach or suggest the present invention as set forth in claim 1.

Similarly, neither Das nor Tillander teach or suggest, alone or in combination, the subject matter of claim 11. Claim 11 recites a means for coupling a catheter tip to the end of the catheter, wherein the coupling means comprises a superelastic material for causing the coupling means to couple the tracking means to the end of the catheter. As discussed above, neither Das nor Tillander even remotely teach or suggest a coupling means comprising a superelastic material for coupling tracking means to the end of a catheter. It is respectfully requested, therefore, that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 17 and 18 are allowable based on their dependence on claims 1 and 11, respectively, and also for their respective recitations of additional aspects of the invention.

Claims 19-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,782,740 to Schneiderman. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the Official Action, the Examiner acknowledges that Schneiderman does not disclose what the rings 33 are made from, and during the interview it was agreed that none of the prior art teaches or suggests "a shape memory material that applies a radially inward clamping force to clamp said catheter tip to said catheter." Moreover, Schneiderman merely teaches retaining rings 33 that retain a balloon 34 to a catheter body 11, and not any structure that clamps a catheter tip to a catheter. It is respectfully requested, therefore, that this rejection be withdrawn.

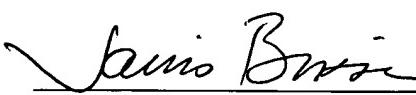
Claims 20-22 are allowable in view of their dependence upon base claim 19 and also for their further recitations of additional aspects of the present invention.

All rejections have been addressed. It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that the present application is in condition for Allowance, and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any outstanding issues remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to resolve the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jānis J. Bikša
Registration No. 33,648
Attorney for Applicant

Medtronic Vascular, Inc.
3576 Unocal Place
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Facsimile No.: (707) 543-5420